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Inside this issue:

<i>Art Club Book Drive</i>	2
<i>English Club Trip to Piggott</i>	2
<i>VPSA (continued from pg. 1)</i>	2
<i>LETA (continued from pg. 1)</i>	2
<i>AATYC Awards</i>	3
<i>Grainger Scholarships</i>	3
<i>The Odd Couple</i>	3
<i>Stroud Earns MSN</i>	4
<i>From the President's Desk... Dr. Wayne Hatcher</i>	4

BRTC Announces New VPSA

Martha Nelson of Pewaukee, Wisconsin, has accepted the position of Vice President for Student Affairs at Black River Technical College, according to President Dr. Wayne Hatcher. She is one of three candidates invited earlier this fall for a campus visit and interview for the position formerly held by Dr. Michael Sullens. The search process included a selection committee's review of a total of forty applicants. The search was narrowed to six and included Skype interviews of the top candidates during the selection process.

"We are very pleased Mrs. Nelson will be bringing over 25 years of knowledge and skills in the field of Student Affairs to our institution," Dr. Hatcher said, "particularly her experience in student retention and completion. These are specific areas where colleges must continue to focus and improve if we are to meet state and federal mandates to increase the number of college completers. College completion is a high priority in Arkansas and at BRTC, as it should be," he explained. "We know the position of Vice President for

Student Affairs (formerly Student Services) is a crucial one in moving us forward in these areas, and we anticipate positive movement in this area as a result of Mrs. Nelson's leadership in these critical aspects of enrollment management here at BRTC."



Martha Nelson

She is expected to begin her work with BRTC by the end of January, according to BRTC Human Resources Director Julie Edington.

Nelson is currently serving as the statewide Coordinator of the Access to Success Project for the University of Wisconsin system. Her work there includes an initiative designed to increase part-time student retention and

(Continued on pg. 2)

Important Dates

- November 22-24**
The Odd Couple
- November 26**
Country Feast
- November 27-28**
Thanksgiving Holiday
- December 3**
Respiratory Care Pinning and Graduation
- December 4-10**
Final Exams
- December 5**
Nursing Pinning and Graduation Ceremony
- December 12**
BRTC Graduation
- December 13**
Semester End Potluck and MSSPS Auction

LETA Celebrates Graduation of 55



Asa Hutchinson

Speaking to an all-time record number of 55 graduates of the Law Enforcement Training Academy at BRTC during a ceremony November 15, former Congressman Asa Hutchinson acknowledged the important role law

enforcement officials play in "everything we want to achieve in Arkansas."

The officers from around the state had just completed a 13-week program as required by the state. The program includes more than 600 hours of intensive training and lab experience in areas including standard police tactics, firearms, legal, educational, technical and tactical skills, physical education and conditioning, community relations, and other areas.

The previous record number of graduates per class stood at 52. LETA Director Steve Shults estimated that

the total number of LETA graduates from the 29 groups to complete the program to date is approximately 1,400 police officers.

Formerly the Undersecretary of Homeland Security, Hutchinson reminded the large audience in attendance that "our society would be in disarray" but for the men and women of law enforcement. He noted the changing role of law officers, whose primary area of focus is no longer threats from nearby communities, but now has grown to include also global threats.

Shults emceed the ceremony, which included the singing of the National Anthem by class member De'Andra Warren of the Wynne P.D., and a presentation by class spokesperson Dale Peters of the Sherwood Police Department. Peters acknowledged the class's appreciation to their instructors, including Shults, Jared Bassham, Carl Dyer, Chris Hankins, Christy Jeffery, Heath McEntire, Mark Mosier, Darren Plaster, Ben Runnels, and Administrative Assistant Judy Ballard.

Peters noted a career in law enforcement is "not about the money. It's a calling," he said. He also noted he and

(Continued on pg. 2)

Art Club Sponsoring Book Drive

The BRTC Art Club is currently collecting books, including unused college textbooks, as a fundraiser and community service project, according to Dr. Sandy D. Baltz, club advisor and fine arts instructor.

“An international company, WorldWide Books, contacted our college and asked if our club would collect books to be distributed to African, Asian, or South American countries next year,” Baltz explained. “I felt this was a worthy cause and got the Art Club involved.”

So far, the club has collected over 21 boxes full of books. They plan to collect until the end of the semester with hopes that many more books will be contributed during book buy back day.

“The company accepts all types of books, not just textbooks, so we will gladly accept any book anyone wishes to donate,” said Baltz. Donation boxes are located in each building on the Pocahontas campus or books can be dropped off in TM110.

WorldWide Books will give the club \$1.00 per “qualified textbook” meeting the criteria of date and college level requirements, but any and all books are welcome and will be distributed to libraries and schools around the world. Books that are unusable will be recycled.

“Our faculty has made a huge contribution, and we thank them,” noted Baltz. “We thank all who have donated already, and encourage everyone to continue through the coming weeks.”



Dawn Jansen (left) and Betty Hodge, members of BRTC's Art Club, stand in front of several boxes filled with books collected for the book drive.

For more information, contact Baltz at 870-248-4152.

English Club Travels to Piggott

English Club members from BRTC Paragould and Pocahontas traveled last month to Piggott for a day of education and fun, according to Lisa Inman, English Club advisor. The day began with a guided tour of the Hemingway-Pfeiffer House and Museum where students were able to see the house where author Ernest Hemingway visited frequently and wrote portions of some of his greatest works, including *A Farewell to Arms*. Actual events that occurred in the Pfeiffer house also inspired Hemingway's story “A Day's Wait.”

Students were also guided through the Pfeiffer barn, which was at one point converted to a writing studio for Hemingway. Students lunched at the Piggott Diner and then headed out to nearby Pumpkin Hollow for an afternoon of activities that included a hay ride, corn maze, and pumpkin picking.

Following their trip, the English Club opened a discussion forum on their Moodle page to allow students the opportunity to post creative writing inspired from the day's activities. Approximately 20 BRTC students and three faculty advisors attended the trip, which was partially funded by the Student Government Association.



VPSA Cont'd from Pg. 1

degree completion at the thirteen campuses of the UW-Colleges, and to facilitate student transfer and success for first and second year students as they continue at UW System institutions.

She previously served as Mount Mary University's Chief Student Affairs Officer, worked as Implementation Manager for Recruitment Plus Comprehensive Enrollment Management System at University of Wisconsin Colleges System, and previously she held the position of Assistant Campus Dean at UW—Washington County (Campus Chief Student Affairs Officer).

Her professional career also includes a stint as Director, Student Support Services Program with UW Colleges, and as Director of the Educational Opportunity Program at State University of New York (SUNY). Nelson's other educational experiences include academic counseling, as International Student Advisor, and as a Learning Specialist, all with SUNY.

Her degrees include a Master of Science in Counselor Education and a Master of Arts in English Literature from Syracuse University, and a Bachelor's of Arts degree from Russell Sage College.

LETA

his classmates are “not out to become heroes—just good officers.” He also spoke of the importance of integrity in law enforcement, saying: “I believe integrity is about doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.”

Also recognized were individual award winners. They included Firearms Award recipients Austin Morgan, Jonesboro P.D., William Shannon, Jonesboro P.D., and William Williams, North Little Rock P.D., first second and third place respectively.

Winning Academic Achievement Awards for first, second, and third place, respectively, were William Shannon, Jamie Counce, West Memphis P.D., and Nathan Threlkeld, Truman P.D.

PT Award winners in order of award were Nathan Ivy, Jonesboro P.D., Michael Stanley, North Little Rock P.D., and Black Miller, Jonesboro P.D.

Top Overall Award recipients, in order of highest award, were Michael Stanley, Nathan Ivy, and Edward Furcron, N. Little Rock P.D.

Shults concluded the ceremony by reminding the graduates of the basic police training course, “This is just the beginning.” He urged them to take advantage of every future opportunity to continue to advance in their skills. He also urged them to always keep their lives and their work in the right perspective and to remember, “Family comes first.”

Cont'd from Pg. 1

Awards Presented to Four at Annual AATYC Conference



Bill Stovall, Executive Director of AATYC (Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges) presented awards to four BRTC associates during AATYC's 2013 Annual Conference. Pictured from left are Laddie Hunter, Trent Ingram, Samantha Baltz and Jamie Tillman Weeks.

Four individuals from BRTC were recognized at the 2013 Annual Conference of AATYC (Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges) held last month in Hot Springs. Those receiving awards were: Laddie Hunter, Outstanding Instructor; Trent Ingram, Outstanding Staff; Samantha (Mantha) Baltz, Outstanding Alum; and Jamie Weeks Tillman, Academic All-Star.

Hunter and Ingram were selected by a vote of the BRTC faculty and staff, while Baltz and Weeks were selected by BRTC's VP of Student Services.

Hunter joined BRTC as an English instructor in 2006. He served for a short period as Academic Coordinator at the Paragould Campus before returning to the classroom. He currently is English De-

partment Head and English Club co-sponsor.

Ingram was hired as Building Equipment Maintenance Repairman for the Pochontas campus in 2008 and has been serving the past 18 months as Interim Physical Plant Director. He has considerable experience in the areas of welding, machining, electrical and plumbing, and holds a Journeyman Plumber License with the State of Arkansas.

Baltz received the Academic All-Star Scholarship while pursuing an AA degree from BRTC, then earned a bachelor's degree at Arkansas State University. She then entered ASU's English master's program, working as a graduate assistant in the writing lab. After graduation, she was hired by BRTC as an adjunct instructor and currently teaches

several English classes while working as a tutor in the college's learning center.

Weeks is a nontraditional student who says she was never a good student in school, but has thoroughly enjoyed learning at BRTC. She is a member of BRTC's National Technical Honor Society, Phi Beta Lambda, and Phi Theta Kappa Society – Beta Delta Phi Chapter where she competed at both State and National Leadership Conferences.

As Academic All-Star, Weeks will receive a full scholarship to any Arkansas four-year college of her choice to complete a bachelor's degree.

Each honoree was presented a plaque by Bill Stoval, Executive Director of AATYC.

Grainger Awards Scholarships in Support of Skilled Trades

BRTC students Benjamin Ball of Cherry Valley and Joel Stanfel of Lake City were each recently awarded a \$2,000 Grainger Tools for Tomorrow scholarship by Grainger, a local distributor of facilities maintenance supplies.

"Grainger is investing in the future of industry and communities through the Grainger Tools for Tomorrow Scholarship Program," said Mark Smith, Branch Manager of Grainger in Jonesboro. "We are proud to partner with BRTC and believe business and community college partnerships are one solution to building a stronger workforce."

Many businesses that rely on skilled workers report difficulty finding qualified individuals to fill open jobs. Skilled trades have been the hardest

segment of the workforce for employers to staff for the last three years, according to a recent study by Manpower Group. Grainger is working to connect businesses and community colleges in an effort to boost local workforce development.

Grainger, in conjunction with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) launched the Grainger Tools for Tomorrow scholarship program in 2006 to help students in the industrial skilled trades realize their educational and career goals. This year they have awarded scholarships to 129 students at 70 community colleges in the U.S. Upon graduation, the scholarship recipients will each receive a customized tool-kit.



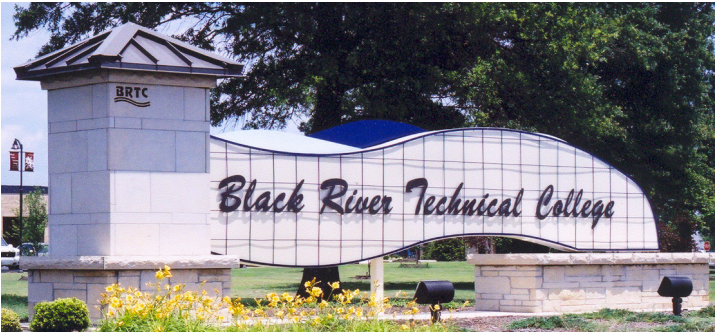
Benjamin Ball

Joel Stanfel

Ball is in the Aviation Maintenance program and Stanfel is in the Industrial Maintenance program, and each plan to graduate in May.

For more information on the Grainger Tools for Tomorrow Scholarship, contact Natasha Rush, Financial Aid Specialist, at 870-248-4019.

Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* opens tonight, Nov. 22, at the Red Goose Deli in downtown Paragould and will feature BRTC's Thomas Fielder as "Oscar" and Jason Linman as "Felix." One dollar from every ticket sold will be donated to the BRTC Foundation. The dinner theatre production is presented by the Greene County Fine Arts Council and will run through Sunday, Nov. 24. Tickets may be purchased online at www.gcfac.org, or by calling 870-236-6223. The cost of tickets is \$25 for both meal and show or \$15 for the show only. Contact GCFAC for more information.



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BRTC Mission Statement

*Blending tradition, technology and innovation
to educate today's diverse students
for tomorrow's changing world.*

From the President's Desk...



*Dr. Wayne Hatcher
President of BRTC*

Over the last two years, it has been rewarding to observe how various faculty and staff have stepped up to be advisors to the various student organizations and clubs at BRTC. Consequently, we have officially grown from two student groups to more than 12—and we have others expressing interest. Our Student Government Association continues to lead the way in this transformation.

One of the positive expected results of this effort is the increased opportunities for students and their advisors to travel to workshops and conferences that relate to the purpose of their specific

organization. It is not uncommon to discover students who have never left this area.

Recently students attended an event in Houston, Texas. They returned infused with an even greater degree of enthusiasm for their profession and they learned more about their discipline, the potential career opportunities and future trends. Admittedly, this is the primary reason we want our students to participate in such endeavors.

There are also collateral benefits associated with traveling outside the region. Some of them had never been to a large city like Houston, and others had never seen the ocean; a few had not experienced either.

Another example is the recent trip taken by some of our Phi Beta Lambda members to California to compete in their national tournament on areas related to skills in the area of Business Technology/ Administration. Our students competed successfully against college and university students all across the nation, as PBL makes no distinction between community college and university students.

And, as with the group that went to Houston, some of these students had never been on a plane, much less to one of those mega-cities in California.

Stroud Earns MSN

Tina Stroud, instructor of nursing at BRTC, recently earned a Master of Science in Nursing degree with an emphasis in Nursing Education from Grand Canyon University. She is a graduate of Delaplaine High



Tina Stroud

School and earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Arkansas State University in 1997. Prior to joining BRTC as a full time nursing instructor in 2008, she worked for seven years at Randolph County (Five Rivers) Medical Center in Pocahontas and three years at St. Bernard's Regional Medical Center in Jonesboro.

Learning occurred in and out of the classroom—and beyond the primary purpose of the trip.

Too often, too many people forget that our responsibility is not to only teach students how to learn and to master skills—nor only to learn how to think critically and make decisions within a well-reasoned value structure, but also “to educate today's diverse students for tomorrow's changing world.” This is exactly what our student organizations and travel opportunities are doing.